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## Interview with Annalicia Carlson (FA 1293)

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Interviewer: Chloe Brown  
Interviewee: Annalicia Carlson  
Date: April 17<sup>th</sup> 2017  
Topic: Women's March

### Annalicia Carlson Interview

CB: Okay. This is Chloe Brown interviewing...

AC: Annalicia Carlson.

CB: Annalicia Carlson. Thank you. And it is April 17<sup>th</sup>. So before we get started, I just want to double check and make sure you consent to having the interview used in both my project and archived in the WKU Special Collections.

AC: Yes. I give my consent.

CB: Thank you. So can you tell me some background information about yourself?

AC: Yeah. So my name is Annalicia Elizabeth Carlson. Elizabeth is a family name so it's been passed down for a couple generations. I'm originally from Phoenix, Arizona, small suburb called Glendale. But I moved to Nashville when I was 11 so that's where I kind of consider myself being from, being from a small suburb of Nashville called Gallatin, Tennessee. My mother is Mexican and she is from California. So sometimes we'll go to Mexico and then California to see some relatives and then her grandfather is with—actually came to America illegally but has since has gained his citizenship and is so proud to be an American. He still has all of his 'I Voted' stickers and everything, very cute. And then my father is Filipino and he's married to a wonderful woman. And my grandmother is full Filipino and she married someone in the Navy. And she is from a very, very small village in the Philippines, very poor. She sends food home all the time, sends money home. She wanted to bring me back but the sex trafficking is so bad down there that she didn't want to put me in that situation. I'm an only child. I'm an only grandchild, and I'm the first-born Carlson girl in three generations. I don't have any cousins. I don't have any siblings. It just only me—and my parents remarried so I have four parents and 12 grandparents because my step parents have step parents. So just really, really the only one. I'm a political science major here. I'm very involved here on the hill with lots of different stuff, very huge feminist.

CB: Okay. So why did you decide to participate in the Women's March?

AC: Because I'm very opposed to our current administration and it's not—I didn't do it because I don't respect my nation's choice. I think that voting is a very beautiful opportunity that I, as a woman, had to—the people before me had to fight for. And so I loved engaging in that. However, I am disappointed in my nation, but I don't disrespect that. And so I just wanted to make sure that, not only, the new administration, but my—the part of the country who did vote

my president in knew that we were not happy in that we will not be oppressed like we think we will be.

CB: Okay. So how do you—what is your opinion on just protests in general?

AC: Well, America definitely didn't get started by peacefulness and gracefulness so I think that protesting is the heart of why this country was founded. I think that it's all of why this country was founded. if we didn't have people out there in the streets, then we wouldn't have an America. So I think that protesting, to me, was one way to connect with my founding fathers, and another way to connect with that the tone of the nation now. I have a voice. Why wouldn't I use it?

CB: Yeah. So why did you choose to travel to Washington instead of attending a more local march?

AC: Well, I was gonna attend the Nashville one, but, honestly, one of my sorority sisters just send in the GroupMe and was just like, "Hey, the WKU—the department at WKU is gonna send some people to Washington. Who wants to go?" And I was like, "Me! Definitely me." So I just went with a couple of my sorority sisters and that's why. The opportunity arose. I had no other plans to do it if it hadn't arisen.

CB: Okay. So how would you describe your march experience?

AC: I thought it was going to be very, very frightening. I thought it was—I thought I would be attacked. Not on my—not physically, but on my views. But instead, it was nothing but love. When you're protesting in the nation's capital, I did not expect it to be like that, but being surrounded by a million-other people who feel the exact same way that you do and that have the exact same views that you do, there is something so beautiful in that movement. And I can't describe it. and I can't put in any type of word to it, but being surrounded by so many people who have such a drive and a passion, to wear their heart on their sleeve, and to fight for what they believe in front of our entire nation. That's something that I loved being a part of. I experienced no—I mean there were some opposers there, but they—I think they expected to be met with hate, but we had—we didn't meet them with that. we just peacefully—if they were blocking us, we just peacefully waited for them to move. If they were shouting at us, we peacefully walked on by. It was not a hate protest. It was, honestly, just making our voices heard. And I think that's what a lot of people don't get. They don't get that it wasn't a hateful protest. We were just there trying to make our voices heard.

CB: Yeah. So a lot of people think that it was a march against Trump. But, instead, you're thinking it's a march maybe for something?

AC: Yeah. I think it was. It was to a certain extent against the current administration, but I didn't fight that. The whole 'not my president' thing—no. He is my president and he 100%-- I will respect the office, but I will not respect him in it. However, I—there were some people marching against him, but that's not what I did. I marched because I wanted to make sure my voice was

heard, as a young woman rising in politics. I would not be oppressed. I would not be met with hate, and I will be respected in that respected office, whatever it may be whenever I grow up.

CB: Alright. So what message did you want to send personally by attending the march? It doesn't have to be just one message.

AC: I wanted to set an example—I wanted to set an example that—when I was sitting in history class as high schooler, when I was reading about woman's suffrage and Elizabeth Cady sat in and all those big names, I see now that I wanted that opportunity for me. I knew that I would never get it. And so when it came, I knew that I couldn't throw away that shot of mine. So I really—that—making my voice heard, I have a small one, but it will be heard. and setting that example for future generations that if you believe in something, you can 100% accomplish it. and yes, that—I don't—our group, our goal was to not get him out of office, but to make our voices heard and we 100% accomplished that all over the world. So that is why I marched, to make my voice heard.

CB: Okay. So how do you identify politically?

AC: I am a Democrat.

CB: Okay. And you do have aspirations for running for office one day?

AC: Correct. Yes. So I hope to be a small town politician, nothing too big. Maybe a representative seat, maybe one day a senator seat, but just small town politics is really what I have a passion for.

CB: Nice. Are you involved in the Kentucky Woman's Network?

AC: I am not. I am not. What is that?

CB: It is a relatively new group which is trying to help women run for office here in Bowling Green and throughout Kentucky. I'll let you know.

AC: Oh, that's awesome.

CB: So how is attending the march with friends? How did that make it—I guess, specifically with your sorority sisters, how did that make it more important?

AC: Oh my gosh. It was absolutely amazing. So a part of our creed with Delta Zeta is: To the world I promise temperance and honor and insight to crusade for justice, to seek the truth, and defend it always. And I knew that I wanted to join that sorority because of that part of the creed because I loved the part "to crusade for justice, to seek the truth, and defend it always." And we got to live out our creed and to physically—oh, I'm getting emotional—to physically speak out from what our founders wanted and make that into our own. So one of my sorority sisters signs actually had that part of the creed on it, and it was so amazing not to only share that experience with them, but for us all to live out that part of that pledge that we took to our letters.

CB: That's really interesting. My sister was a DZ at Georgetown and, for my experience just observing them, they weren't very political at all.

AC: Really?

CB: If they did have political ideologies, they mostly swung conservative.

AC: Wow.

CB: And I see that a lot in fraternities and sororities. I mean I'm not super involved with that part of Western, but is that your experience?

AC: Yeah. Mostly that seems to be now when you get to—I think it's kind of the bottom tier of sororities and fraternities, they seem to be very liberal. So I know my sorority, we—there's the majority of them are very, very liberal and our president is a huge feminist, and very, very liberal. So I wouldn't say that's the point in our sorority because there are five sorority sisters that went and I recently went to D.C. again and there were three of my sorority sisters that went with me there, and we just hung out in D.C. So my—DZ here is very, very liberal.

CB: Nice. So what was the reception of the rest of the people in your sorority?

AC: They were loving it. They were—they posted about us, congratulating us, they were proud of us when we got back. Because it was the Monday or the Saturday right before classes started. So whenever we got back, in that next chapter, in that next week, they were coming up to us asking us how our experiences were, asking us for pictures. They were calling us, tweeting us. They were so in awe that we were so brave to go and do that. We got nothing but love and support from our chapter.

CB: Nice. Did you feel as though you were—I'm assuming that you felt as though you were a representative of your group while you were there.

AC: Oh, yeah, definitely. And I loved it. I loved representing, not only WKU, not only Delta Zeta, but representing minority woman in—my Hispanic family and then my Filipino family.

CB: Okay. So I know that—I mean marching is a political act, right? And women tend to be pushed out of politics. So what are your—I guess that's what I'm assuming—what are your perspectives on women in politics right now?

AC: Well it's hard. Whenever the whole political thing—the political move. That was just shunning every woman. I was in a class called American Presidency here at WKU and I had this guy who, to the point of harassment, he would keep asking me out on dates and asking me out on dates and he would get the point of grabbing my planner and writing in a date. I'm like, “That's—I don't want to do it. I have a boyfriend, but thank you.” And it got—and after the “grab her by the pussy” comment came out, we went into class the next day, and he talked about

it, no big deal. But then, the—it was Tuesday or Thursday after the results came back, he came to me and was like, “Well I guess I don’t need to ask you out on a date anymore. I can just grab you by the pussy and make you.” And I was just so shocked and I like could not even talk. And then he was like, “What? I’m just quoting what my president said.” And I was just like—and thankfully, another guy was like, “Dude, that’s not cool.” And then they took it into their own hands, but as a woman I didn’t expect to be—I’m a woman in a political science class, as my political science major, I never expected to be talked to that way because I was looked at someone as a woman in power. But it did not stop him from saying those comments to me, and as a woman in politics, it is hard. Because everything I do will not be equal. And I’ve noticed that, not only—even in my classes, even with liberal professors. It’s, “Annalicia, why don’t you go with John Doe.” It’s not like, “Annalicia can do it herself.” It’s, “Annalicia needs a little help.” And it’s not anything against my merit. It’s just because of my sex.

CB: So how did your identity as both a woman and woman from a minority group, or multiple minority groups, how did that play into your involvement with the march?

AC: Well, I thought it was my duty to march, not only as a woman and not only as a minority, but I felt a huge calling to D.C. and to that movement, because I was not only representing one, but representing three.

CB: So have you taken any additional political actions after the march?

AC: Yeah! So me and my sorority sisters went to, in that picture, actually one of them has a citizenship in social justice minor. And so she’ll tell us about stuff. So one night we made some signs and we shipped them off to—I don’t remember where it was, but we were just helping out with other protests. And not anything here in Bowling Green, but we’ve—she helped author some type of petition for higher education. So we signed off on that as well. So little things, yeah.

CB: Yeah. Everyone is really busy this part of the semester. So do you—the phrase ‘nasty woman’ was kind of widely spread after it was mentioned in the debate, how do you—what do you think about that term? And do you identify with that phrase?

AC: I think that the term was used from our president as like, “Oh, she’s a gross woman.” But we, the feminist movement, have adopted that into a powerful woman. And if you’re a nasty woman then you’re like top dog and you’re like awesome and you’re just killing it. So I like it. I have not referred to myself as that just because I’m scared of the implications of it with people who are not familiar with the movement. But I’m here for it 100%.

CB: So did you carry signs at the march?

AC: I did. I did. My sign said, “I may not live to see her glory, but I will gladly join the fight.” And that’s actually a lyric from Hamilton the American Musical which huge Hamilton fan. So I love that one and then one of my sorority sisters, hers said, “Let’s give them hell ladies.” And then Bella, another one of my sorority sisters had the part from our creed on it.

CB: Okay. Do you remember any signs from the march that you just really loved?

AC: Yeah! Can I show you?

CB: Sure!

AC: Okay, awesome. There was one that just really stuck out to me. And it was, “America is...” and then it had a list of everything that makes America great. Yeah, so it’s the United States of immigrants, veterans, Muslims, Christians, Atheists, Jews, Asians, Natives, Whites, Blacks, Latinos, Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, LGBTQIA, the disabled, the poor, the one percent, and the middle class. And I—the last part, the one percent and the middle class, that one really hit me too because you don’t—you think of minorities being just a skin color, but minority is anything that makes you different. So and like the one percent, especially, that one really hit me. And then this one: our children are watching. And that was one of the reasons I marched was to set that example. And my child, whoever it may be, or whatever sex, or whatever gender that they identify with, that they’re watching. They’ll look back at this and—to set that example. And those are the best too. I was like, “Wow. That’s really awesome.”

CB: What about the pussy hats? So did you wear one?

AC: Yes! Okay, so they were giving them out. So this woman from Minnesota, we were—all the buses let off. It was like a mile walk down to where the march started, and this woman had on four big garbage bags—not like the Kroger ones. Like the big ones, and she had knitted all of these pussy hats and were handing them out. And she said that she had been to like all around handing these things out and she ships them to like New York and Phoenix. And I’m like, “Phoenix! That’s where I’m from,” and to Nashville and to the big march in Kentucky, and she had like shipped them and she had people in each state that were handing them out for her, but she wanted to be—like she had knitted all of these hats and were just handing them out. It was really, really awesome.

CB: They seem to have become a symbol of the march. So what do they symbolize to you?

AC: I think that initially it was—it got adopted from the comment that our president had made. However, now I see it as a unity thing. So us coming together, if you know what that means then you symbolize what we marched for.

CB: Okay. What about the criticisms of the march?

AC: Well, my grandfather, the veteran, he got a purple heart from Vietnam, very uptight man. And with him having three boys, and then not having any girls in the family and then his granddaughter comes—I’m kind of like his one untouchable, she-can-do-no-wrong except for this moment. So he called me up and was just so angry at me that I would disrespect authority, and he’s a very, very conservative man as you can imagine. He was so mad, and he asked me why I marched and what did I think I accomplished, and he especially was just so, so mad at me. And our relationship has not been the same since, but if that is the cost of freedom in woman for politics and women in general, then that is the price I am willing to pay.

CB: Okay. Did you have any positive conversations about your attendance with other members of your family?

AC: Oh, yeah! My mom, she was offering to send me money with me. She was offering if I needed anything. My mom was so proud of me, and then my stepfather, Jason—he's more like a father to me—he was very, very proud of me as well. She posted pictures like, "Oh, look at my daughter." I grew up in a very, very liberal family, so they were so happy I went. Now my father, Phillip—who is my biological father—he was not too happy about it, but he was glad that I was standing up for something I believed in. so we are—our views don't parallel, but he was proud that was out there anyway. And he respected that which was really cool that he didn't respect what I was doing, but he respected that I had become encouraged to do it.

CB: Do you think that the march fulfilled its purpose?

AC: People had different purposes. So my purpose: I 100% fulfilled my purpose for it. Now the people who were just angry marching and who wanted—who were just mad at President Trump, no. That didn't accomplish anything. But the group of women that I went with, we accomplished our goal of just making our voices heard and setting that example.

CB: Yeah. Could you walk me through the day? You don't have to go into extreme detail, just kind of an overview of the day.

AC: Yeah. Well from the day or from the bus ride?

CB: I guess where it started the night before.

AC: Okay. Yeah. So we had met up in Diddle Arena on a big bus, and there were people from like their undergrad years but there were older people too just from Bowling Green who had no affiliation with WKU that just decided to show up. And it was—the bus ride down there and we made several stops at gas stations, bathrooms, everything like that. But we slept all the way down there, got there early Saturday morning, got off the bus, everybody was really cranky. I stayed in the same clothes for three days straight. We got off the bus, we had our signs, and then we walked—well we were going to take the metro but the metro lines were so, so long. So we were like, "Screw it. Let's just walk." So we walked all the way down there but that was what all the other people were doing too. So the march started way before it actually started. We were walking down there trying to find our way, but so was everyone else. So we got the opportunity to kind of pre-game before the march. And then we marched everywhere. We initially had a pathway but there were so many people that we just walked. I don't even know where I walked. I know I passed a lot of things but since there were just so many people, it was just like we were following everybody. So I don't think that we went the initial route that we were supposed to because D.C. was just flooded with people. And then we marched all day and then we got back on the bus, slept the entire way back, got back Sunday, got ready for classes, and then Monday morning classes started.

CB: Sounds like a long day. I actually got to stay in D.C. so I wasn't...



AC: Oh, that's awesome!

CB: Yeah, it wasn't nearly as bad, but...

AC: Where did you stay?

CB: I stayed in an Airbnb.

AC: Oh, wow. That's awesome.

CB: Yeah. We just got one pretty much the day the march was announced so it was like 65 dollars.

AC: Oh, that's awesome. That's so smart.

CB: It was very lucky.

AC: I bet they went up.

CB: They did.

AC: That's awesome. I went to D.C. over spring break and we stayed at a hostel which was like not the best experience, but one of the experiences you just need to have to build character. Never again, Airbnb is where I'm going for the rest of my life.

CB: Hostels are nice. They're nice if you travel a lot, but I stayed, when I was in Spain, in a few because it's impossible to afford hotel rooms. But, yeah, Airbnb is my thing now.

AC: Oh.

CB: So did you feel as though the Women's March formed a community?

AC: Oh, yes, definitely. Well there's a group on Facebook that we created so there's a small community and then the girls that I went with were all WKU Young Democrats together. And we're all in other organizations together too. So it formed a small community there, and then a lot of the girls in my political science classes also went. So we'll now study together and everything. So, yeah, definitely 100%.

CB: Okay. I'm going to ask you some more questions about this. Okay, so the Facebook group, are you talking about the Social Justice Clearinghouse?

AC: No. There was another Facebook group made and it's just about the Woman's March. It was just a Facebook group made and it announces other things, other social justice things going on. It was made by Leanne, the leader of it, the leader of the march of the WKU march.

CB: Okay. I might ask you to show me that later. But the people that you went with are part of the Young Democrats and, also, is the study group something that's kind of cohesive? Or is it more fluid?

AC: It's for that class. So it's like me and this one girl; we both went. Well she actually went with the WKU group to the Inauguration, but she skipped out on that and then did D.C. stuff. Then the next day, she did the march stuff and stayed behind. She didn't go with the WKU group, but she came back with us. So that was really cool. So we're in the same class so we'll study together. So it's not like a big group. We're friends, but if we have similar majors or the same class or whatever. And then there's another girl in my group where we'll study together and we'll talk about it too.

CB: Cool. So it's one of those things where you know a person that also attended the march, you know that you have a lot in common.

AC: Yeah.

CB: So you feel kind of an affinity with that person.

AC: Yeah.

CB: That makes sense. How would you describe the feeling of community at the march?

AC: It was—community doesn't really begin to describe it. It was kind of like being at home with your people. It was—you all are fighting for the same thing. It felt more like a—I don't want to say family because that sounds so cliché. But it was more like a big welcome and a big we're-all-here-fighting-the-same-thing. Nobody has any enemies, all that. The color of your skin, your political views—pretty sure we all have the same political views—all of that was just stripped away, and we were all one. It was far beyond a community. We were just there, being one, fighting for the same thing.

CB: Yeah. And so were you impressed or disappointed by the march?

AC: Oh, I was absolutely impressed. Impressed is...

CB: An understatement?

AC: Yeah! I was—people came out with signs—oh I saw a lot of celebrities that were just walking right beside me and they were one with us too. Yeah, I saw so many things that I was teary-eyed the entire day. Just that amazed that what my country could do, very, very proud of those women.

CB: I only have a couple more questions. Actually, I only have one more question, sorry. So I've been asking people to kind of sum up their march experience in two to three sentences.

AC: Oh, wow.

CB: So if you can still the march, what are your major take-aways?

AC: I saw exactly what Democracy looks like and it was not in a text book, but I actually saw it. And I want my future kids and my future grandchildren to see exactly how beautiful that is. And that was why I marched.

CB: Alright. Was there anything that I didn't ask that you think is—maybe you were expecting me to ask it and I didn't ask you or anything that you wanted to say that I didn't cover.

AC: No. Oh there were a lot of men there. I'm sure you know because you were there, but I didn't expect to see so many men there. But I saw a man and a woman—this is actually one of my favorite pictures. And he has a sign that says, "I married a nasty woman." And then her shirt said, "Nasty woman," too which was just so cool to me. So I love that, that it was a couple bonding experience for them and then you saw men there who were—you would think that would be our enemies they were 100% in alliance with us. So I absolutely love that.

CB: Yeah. Well I realize that I had one more question. Did you post about your march experience on social media?

AC: I did. I did. I posted that one picture I sent you of me holding the sign. Just me and it said, "I saw exactly what Democracy looks like, and my god is it beautiful." And I posted about that and that's when I got the call from my grandfather. That's when I got the call from my father, and they were not happy. But that's my most liked picture on social media. And then I got nothing but love and "wow I'm so proud of you" and people I hadn't talked to for forever talked about it. I posted—then whenever political things would come back out, I would share it and comment and be like, "This isn't why I marched." There was a big article that came out and I didn't even pay any attention to it, but it was talking about how you march but he's still your president or something to that effect. And that one infuriated me because them and the point are nowhere near friends and they did not at all get why we did that. So that was a little frustrating and I was like, "I spent three, almost three, days of my life fighting for people like you, and you still don't get it, but it's okay." So that was the only negative thing.

CB: Alright.